

BARBOUR COUNTY

Honorable Charles Hart

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Council Priorities

1. Seek programs to assist families as a whole in basic living skills; such as parenting skills, financial management, discipline options, example: multi-systemic approach.

Seek Funding to implement a center of resources for families

2. Drug and alcohol prevention.

Implementation of UPS Grant Programs

3. Teen pregnancy

Educate youth about the consequences of engaging in sexual activity and prevention methods.

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county

Early Care Education

Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Pre-K program needs to be established in the Barbour County school system

Action Steps

- 1) Confirm that a plan exists for the formation of a Pre-K program in the county school system.
- 2) Confirm the existence of a timeline and determine if plans are on schedule.
- 3) Upon request, the council will explore grants to aid in the formation of a Pre-K program for the county school system.

Provide education to childcare providers and to families with children ages zero to five

Action Steps

- 1) Network community groups and leaders with the Family Guidance Center's Kids and Kin program.
- 2) This program is active in Barbour County.
- 3) Help with the dissemination of information about programs that already available in the county.
- 4) Encourage involvement in the programs.

Economic Security

Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

The need to become financially independent

Action Steps

- 1) Cooperate with parents, school systems, and other partners to encourage completion of high school.
- 2) Make referrals to job readiness/training programs and job fairs.
- 3) Partner with agencies at the Eufaula Career Center to define career goals and promote job placement.

Coordination of support systems that support families

Action Steps

- 1) Create awareness of local support systems such as transportation; budgeting; dietary and nutrition needs (food stamps, WIC); health issues and education requirements.

Assurance of child support for eligible children

Action Steps

- 1) Assist appropriate partners in seeking location of non-custodial parent.
- 2) Encourage child support court to expedite reviews of delinquent child support payments.
- 3) Promote and distribute literature for responsible parenthood programs.

Education

Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Behavior intervention

Action Steps

- 1) Encourage school personnel to take a prevention measure when dealing with behavior problems.
- 2) Support programs that encourage students to make sensible choices in adverse situation.
- 3) Assist in establishing anger management programs as an alternative to attending in school suspension.

Dropout prevention

Action Steps

- 1) Involve community agencies in mentoring and tutoring activities for at-risk youth.
- 2) Assist in establishing extended learning opportunities for middle school and high school.

Literacy issues for ages zero through nineteen

Action Steps

- 1) The Council will recruit volunteers to assist the Barbour County Literacy Associations.
- 2) The Council will ask agencies and other community resources to remind parents to read with their children and enforce good classroom behavior.

Health

Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases

Action Steps

- 1) Provide educational workshops and programs geared towards prevention.
- 2) Make referrals to the county health department; Montgomery AIDS Outreach, and other outreach agencies for assistance.
- 3) Support abstinence programs already in existence.

Childhood obesity

Action Steps

- 1) Utilize nutrition education programs such as the W.I.C. Program and the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service NEP Program along with teaching healthy meal choices at schools.
- 2) Provide general education regarding potential health risk factors related to obesity.
- 3) Continue to stress the need for physical education to be a requirement within the schools.

Substance abuse

Action Steps

- 1) Utilize the county's UPS grant to continue to collect county data on substance abuse in the area.
- 2) Stress the need for continued education as to risk and dangers regarding substance abuse.
- 3) Provide alternative recreational activities to foster positive self-esteem, thus preventing substance abuse.

Parent Involvement Skills

Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Need for continued increase of parental involvement

Action Steps

- 1) Provide court-ordered parenting classes through the Eufaula City School System; especially in Child in Need Supervision cases; The Eufaula City Schools will provide parent summit in which parents have an opinion of various classes to attend.
- 2) "Operation Save our Teens" will be available to all families in Barbour County.
- 3) Parenting classes need to be provided to educate parents of children zero to five about what children need to know before kindergarten.

Parents to become more aware of the drug problem in Barbour County and recognize the signs of alcohol and drug abuse. Additionally how to access programs for alcohol and drug treatment and rehabilitation. Also, how to prevent drug and alcohol use

Action Steps

- 1) Through the UPS grant funds coordinate with the District Attorney's office to provide drug education programs to schools, parents, and local community organizations.

Make parents more accountable for their child's behavior, education and basic needs

Action Steps

- 1) To make parents a part in all juvenile court cases.
- 2) Have churches and community organizations educate parents about their parental responsibilities.
- 3) School systems will send out information on becoming more involved in child's education.

Safety

Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Lack of availability of prevention programs for ages six to eighteen to include substance abuse programs

Action Steps

- 1) Support community collaboration for programs.
- 2) Support Barbour County Substance Abuse Coalition and their model programs for sixth graders (Too Good for Drugs and SMART Moves Program).
- 3) Continued planning for "Operational Save our Teens" presentation as well as other drug and gang awareness presentations.
- 4) Youth leadership skills presentations (Be a positive leader rather than a follower).

Need for our youth to spend their free time in a positive constructive manner

Action Steps

- 1) Support current programs such as: Boys and Girls Club of Eufaula, Eufaula Community Center, and the Barbour County Resource Center in Clayton.
- 2) Seek mentoring programs.
- 3) Facilitate more avenues for recreation/sports and educational programs in the county.
- 4) Seek transportation assistance for those children outside the City of Eufaula in order for them to have access to recreation/sports and educational programs.

Lack of programs to address stressors that lead to abuse, neglect, or abandonment of children

Action Steps

- 1) Seek parenting classes.
- 2) Encourage schools to provide literature "Tips for Better Parenting" to parents and provide teens with parenting classes through the school system.
- 3) Continue yearly tribute to recognize April as Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month as well as providing year round public awareness information on child abuse and neglect.
- 4) Continue to promote the need for public assistance in supplementing day care costs to low-income families who are working or in job training.
- 5) Provide yearly child abuse and neglect training for professionals i.e. law enforcement, school personnel.

Policy Recommendations

- Funding for long-term drug and alcohol treatment.
- Gather information regarding programs at SARSI.
- Transportation for poor rural counties.
- Parenting education/skills development.
- Coordinate resources with Crisis Pregnancy Center to combat teen pregnancy.
- Additional training for all agencies concerning child abuse and neglect.
- Provide more funding for recreation/sports in rural areas.
- Develop resources to sustain UPS programs after grant ends.
- Coordinate resources to assist children and families with mental health issues.